

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Community Focus Group: Neighborhood House of North Richmond
Held at the Neighborhood House Administration Building
Richmond, California
June 7, 2008**

Question 1

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| 1. Which of the following strategies should be a higher priority? | |
| A. Spending transportation funds to maintain the existing system of roads and the existing bus, rail and ferry services in the region | 10 |
| | |
| B. Spending transportation funds to build new roads and add more bus, rail and ferry services in the region | 7 |

Comments for A:

Seems to be a choice between new and maintaining old. There is no reason to continue with the new if we can't keep up with the old. We can improve the old, but we need to make better use of the current system.

Upgrade what they have rather than get something new. It would be more expensive to make everything new.

Stay with the old system...keep it running. If you stop and start on something new, that's not as good as keeping the existing system running.

Its going to cost more to buy something new...when you can't even get the current system to run, you can't focus on something new.

You need to keep the old system, that's better for the employees because they know the existing system. The jobs won't be displaced with new technology.

What are you going to do with the old if you get all new stuff?

Comments for B:

I am looking for expanding the existing system because then you can get to new places.

You can't go a lot of places now, you need to drive a car. I would like to get more places.

Expanding to different places. We need to get services farther east, there will be less congestion on the highways. Easier for people farther east to get to work here.

Roads, new roads, make it smoother and better. Don't just fill potholes.

Question 2

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|---|---|
| 2. How much of the \$30 billion dollar budget should be spent on maintaining local streets and roads, state highways, and public transit systems? | |
| A. Up to 25% (\$7.5 billion) | 4 |
| B. Up to 50% (\$15 billion) | 4 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| C. Up to 75% (\$22.5 billion) | 4 |
| D. 100% (\$30 billion) | 5 |

Comments:

A, because hypothetically you do have other operations along with maintenance. If you spent all the money on one thing, you ignore the rest. You can always add more funds.

A, same. If you put it all in one spot, what about the rest?

B, because half the money should be spent on maintenance and the rest on something new.

C, I agree with previous, but want a bit more on maintenance. You can't spend it all on one thing, so I'd like to see a little go to something new.

I don't know if I can invest this money...75% on maintenance and invest the 25% and then have more in the end and be able to spend more on the new stuff.

D, because if you put the money in the roads right in the first place, you can spend less to maintain them.

D, I agree. If you do it right and keep on it, you won't have to worry as much on the big maintenance. If you get other money you can funnel that money in other places.

D, regular maintenance is good. There should be regular maintenance.

Don't screw off the money. 30 billion is a lot, so do it right the first time. If it would be my own money, I would want the best for it, so this is no different.

If I give you \$30 billion and say in six months you have to spend it, what are you going to do?

I pick A and D...I just want more money.

I would like to see them divvy it up over all the 25 years.

Question 3

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| 3. If you didn't spend all \$30 billion dollars on maintenance projects, where would you spend the rest of the funds? |
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Comments:

Access....if you don't have access, none of this will make sense. Transit needs to be affordable. I would use the money to lower the fares or to use the system.

Make the system affordable.

I would put the money toward more maintenance.

I would invest the money and put it toward the community. More buses and better maintenance.

More buses, more service means more jobs.

Increased service. I want more buses. I have to wait so long for the bus. Also, fix up the bus stops.

Better bus stops. By my house, it's just a pole. I want more.

I would like to see the money spent on training for all public transit employees. Bus drivers are rude and abrasive. Some people can't move as fast as we would like them to. We need to better train drivers to be kinder, more patient.

On the job training for the poor. Make sure the streets are painted and potholes are filled, streetlights work, etc.

Question 4

| 4. Which of the following projects should be a higher investment priority for the region's transportation system? | |
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| A. Spending transportation funds on the highway system to relieve traffic congestion, including ramp metering, high-occupancy toll lanes, etc. | 5 |
| | |
| B. Spending transportation funds on public transit options, including rail and buses to provide alternatives to driving | 12 |
| | |
| C. Spending transportation funds on walking paths and bicycle lanes to provide alternatives to driving | 0 |

Comments:

A, to improve congestion; the metering helps now. Congestion, no matter how hard they try, it just gets that way. At the tollgate, it's slow. In Vallejo, it's like a snail. I would like to get things moving.

A, I agree with previous. Keep things moving.

A, an immediate concern is A. Get the traffic moving, that's the priority.

B, I think if they put more buses and BART out there during commute times, people would get out of their cars.

B, better if there were more buses and BART. Also for the parents, the fares are being raised. It's going up, like the gas.

B, same. More buses and BART, esp. during peak hours, people would get out of their cars. We also need it now.

B, I agree. If you have more people more people taking public transit, you may be able to lower the prices.

If we have an all day pass, instead of paying each time, that would encourage more people to ride the bus. Some people have to be out all day...it's costly. They have a lot of things to do, it adds up.

B, if they put more public transit out there, congestion would improve. Fewer cars on the road.

B, because the cars and energy expended cause pollution, which is bad. Gas, pollution and money, it's all bad.

B, because the expense of gas is high.

Public transit...seniors and youth get a discount. If we all ride, maybe the price would be reduced. Passes are expensive and it's hard.

If they make a \$10 (or some other amount) all day pass, that would be good. We need this extra option.

Increase the bus hours. Also have the buses go to schools, keep that running. It helps kids out.

I picked A. But, I like all day passes, too. I picked A because I drive now....I notice things on the road, not transit so much.

The all day passes, it helps us, but the agencies may lose money. If the bus system may lost money, we would end up paying more. They would pass on the cost. After so many rides, you would get a free ride. Like an incentive program.

Spare the Air Days should come back...free transit.

BART had a kid's day. I took a kid that had never ridden BART. I ended up not taking him because he was sick, but I need to take him.

Question 5

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| 5. What's the one improvement that could be made to public transportation that would increase ridership? |
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Comments:

Cheaper fares for the bus. The fares are going up and it's expensive.

The only way....affordability. You need to make it tax deductible to ride transit. People use their salaries to ride transit to get to work. Let's give people a deduction on their transit costs. Employers should sponsor their employees to get to work. A subsidy to help get people to work.

Improve the quality of the bus. The buses are run down, the seats will be moving and coming apart. This is bad.

More routes. People have different places to go and we need more options so we don't have to drive.

Buses pass me by and that's not right. That's wrong. Drivers should stop. More training for the drivers. The bus agencies want the business. But bus drivers don't stop.

The bus drivers will sometimes wait for people running for the bus, wait and then leave. They will laugh at the people running.

The bus agencies should have a person on the bus to make sure that the driver is doing the right thing. They need someone to ensure that the younger people aren't rowdy. It's loud and I am not sure that I want to stay on the bus. Drivers don't care...they just want their pay check. The extra person would ensure that things are going right. Security would also help to make things safe.

Undercover supervisors sit in the back now. But, where are they? Some supervisors know the drivers, so nothing comes out of that. They need to be a person who the drivers don't know so no favoritism happens.

There needs to be a camera on the bus to record what's going on. Things that go on don't always get reported. A camera would record it...so someone can report what's on the camera. The camera doesn't lie.

The only time they use the cameras is when there is violence. You should use it for more than that.

Question 6

| 6. Which of the following should be a higher priority? | |
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| A. Providing more transportation funds to communities that are planning to build more housing along BART and other public transit lines | 4 |
| B. Providing transportation funds evenly to communities regardless of where they are planning to build homes | 13 |

Comments:

B, because there should be choice in building communities.

B, because if they put it along the lines the houses are expensive. People are moving out because it's expensive. Spending should be even.

B, it should be even. If you have money, you don't always have pay everyone else's way.

B, I agree.

I work in No. Richmond and there is only one bus and it's sad. It's too much to wait for a ride. Please distribute the funds evenly.

B, because I don't want to be stuck. I have to walk 30 minutes to get to school and that's too long.

B, let's share.

If you live close to Hilltop, you can get anywhere. We need to make more places accessible to transit.

I want to acknowledge that I help to build BART. I no longer work there. I want to say that not everyone wants to live stacked up on everyone. I like room. I don't want to be stuck in a building. BART is also noisy.

Question 7

| 7. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: <i>"There should be a subsidy for low-income riders."</i> | |
|---|---|
| A. Strongly Agree | 8 |
| B. Agree | 2 |
| C. Neutral | 5 |
| D. Disagree | 2 |
| E. Strongly Disagree | 0 |

Comments:

A, there should be a subsidy because poor people need a break.

There should be a discount for low income. They don't have a lot of money to take the bus. They need it.

They have low income housing, they need low income transit.

When you are on the bus, you need to get from point A to point B and you don't always have the money.

I disagree but what is low income? Gas is so high, and my paycheck is the same. Everyone should get a break. If you have a little bit less, I understand, but I need a break, too.

I disagree, you might be working and not qualify and still need it. Everybody who's working should get a discount. Maybe the poor should get a lower discount, but all should get a discount. All they way around...some are working at min. wage jobs and they need help too.

A lower fare would be great.

A discount is a slap in the face...you can't afford the fare to begin with.

Competition between transit agencies may help to lower fares.

I am neutral...I work but don't make enough. You are damned if you do and damned if you don't.

I work with social services and was classified low income but what is that? You can be low income and buy \$100 tennis shoes...abusing the system. Where are your priorities.

I am neutral too. Low income needs help, but I work and I work hard. If you work, you don't get a break. And that's not right. I need help, too. Aside from the way I feel about me, the low income do need help.

Low income does need help, but the workers need help, too. We need a discount for all. We all need help.

Question 8

| 8. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: <i>"I favor basing all transit fare subsidies on income rather than age or disability."</i> | |
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| A. Strongly Agree | 1 |
| B. Agree | 1 |
| C. Neutral | 11 |
| D. Disagree | 2 |
| E. Strongly Disagree | 1 |

Comments:

I am neutral. Everything should be neutral....the same fare for all....lower fares. It shouldn't be if you are rich you pay more, everyone should pay less.

You can't help that you are disabled. Disabled persons should get a discount.

Some people don't know if I am poor or rich. I may look poor, but I could be rich. It should be equal between rich and poor.

How are you going to determine if you are poor or rich? Lower rate for all is better.

Who's going to know you are rich or poor. Equal, all across the board. You can be rich today and something could happen and you are poor tomorrow.

I agree that it should be based on income. That's our society. We file taxes and so we know incomes. We should base it on that.

I agree. Why do they have HUD housing for people who would be homeless. If people don't have transit, they could get robbed (of their transit fare.) This would help us out, too. Some people can afford to pay the regular price, but others need help.

If you can afford to pay \$5 per gallon for gas, you can pay more. To fill my gas tank, I have to pay \$63. That's a lot. Are you taking transit for work or pleasure? For my pleasure, I have to pay. If it's pleasure, you should pay regular price. If it's need, you should pay less.

Question 9

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| 9. Which of the following should be a higher priority? | |
| A. Reducing tailpipe emissions and encouraging alternatives to driving, such as public transit, bicycling, walking, etc. | 12 |
| | |
| B. Reducing traffic congestion and improving traffic flow to make it easier to drive around the Bay Area | 5 |

Comments:

A, because we need to get out of our cars.

I have two cars...it takes \$100 to fill one, \$60 to fill the other. Unless it's a must, I don't drive anymore. I don't drive for pleasure. I would love to bicycle, but can't. I like to take public transit sometimes.

I like B. We need to keep the cars moving.

A, we need to get out of the cars. We need to back to old school ways.

A, gas is going up. Buses help. My mom has to drive kids to different schools...that's a lot.

I like B. If cars are moving, you don't have to worry about the pollution in the air. I like to drive, it's better.

I don't see one being better than the other. If you make public transit affordable and accessible and you encourage the reduction of traffic to improve flow, that's good. You can't get me out of my car...I like to drive.

Walking, if you walk, you get to know people. You bring the connection to the community back.

I went with B. Cars allow freedom.

Question 10

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| 10. Which programs do you think are most effective to reduce the amount of emissions? (Select as many as you think will reduce emissions.) |
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| A. Subsidize purchase of newer/cleaner vehicles | 8 |
| B. Provide more/cheaper public transit | 14 |
| C. Develop awareness campaign to encourage people to reduce fossil fuel use | 4 |
| D. Build more bike paths and sidewalks | 11 |
| E. Funding incentives to cities to allow more development near transit | 9 |
| F. Support local traffic signal timing coordination | 9 |

Comments:

We need public transit, to reduce fuels, more bikes and sidewalks, we need incentives.

I ride my bike to school, too.

All are good. You've got to make people aware of what they are doing.

All the cars we have now cause pollution...new cars help the environment. We need to get rid of the old cars.

Question 11

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|--|---|
| 11. How much of the \$30 billion dollar budget should be spent on maintaining local streets and roads, state highways, and public transit systems? | |
| A. Up to 25% (\$7.5 billion) | 6 |
| B. Up to 50% (\$15 billion) | 4 |
| C. Up to 75% (\$22.5 billion) | 3 |
| D. 100% (\$30 billion) | 4 |

Comment:

I changed my mind. I put 25%, I put 50% before. I want new things.

Question 12

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| 12. Thinking ahead to the year 2035, if you had \$30 billion, how much would you spend on each of the following projects to prepare for our regional transportation needs? To make it simpler, let's change the \$30 billion to \$30. Out of the \$30, please fill in the dollar amount you would spend for each area. | |
| A. Maintenance of existing roads and systems | \$132 |
| B. Relief of traffic congestion | \$87 |

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|---|-------|
| C. Provide transportation funds to cities that develop housing near transit | \$91 |
| D. Provide access to public transit systems for all Bay Area residents | \$125 |
| E. Reducing automobile emissions | \$87 |

Comments:

I am not sure about emissions....I think that corporations should focus on that. Refineries especially.

Maintenance is really important, so I gave more to A.

Stronger on public transit.

Equal shares for all.

A – D are equal and they all help E.

Public transit is a little more favored.

Question 13

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| 13. Now that we've done the budget, would you favor pursuing new revenues to increase the funding? | |
| A. Yes | 13 |
| B. No | 4 |

Comment:

I said no, because there are people out there dying. Transportation isn't that serious to me.

Question 14

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| 14. Which of the following new revenue sources would you support? (Multiple answers are okay.) | |
| A. Regional gas fee | 1 |
| B. Higher bridge toll | 1 |
| C. Road tolls | 2 |
| D. Vehicle registration fees | 5 |
| E. County transportation sales taxes | 1 |
| F. Other new revenues | 8 |
| G. No new fees or increases | 7 |

Comments:

I like D. It's convenient and accountable. Everyone has to register his or her vehicle. People who like to drive should have to pay for it.

The heavier car is the more you should pay. The weight of your car determines the cost of registration...D is good.

I said D because everybody registers his or her car. You pay in one lump sum. If you can't afford to drive, don't.

F, if you get a ticket, they should up the price and use those funds. If you break the law you should pay more.

Drunk drivers should pay even more for that. Especially if they injure people.

Tax the profits of the oil and gas companies (they have record profits now.)

Fundraising – carnival or something where people would want to come and would charge them a fee